

Mr. KENNEDY. Reserving the right to object, will the leader ask for 2 hours equally divided? Is that agreeable?

Mr. LOTT. I think that is fine, Mr. President. I amend my request to that effect, with the time equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Again, I hope progress can be made on the bill. There have been some proposals going back and forth, and we will continue to work on those, hopefully later on tonight. Tomorrow morning, Friday, when we are in session, there will be a recorded vote, hopefully by 10:30 a.m., and we will then give the Members a report on what action, perhaps, has been agreed to beyond that.

I know Members from both sides of the aisle will be working on this. If progress is not made, then we will go forward with cloture. If something can be worked out—and I think it can; I hope it will be—then certainly we can take action to vitiate this cloture vote.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business, with Members permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MISS RUBY MCGILVRAY BRYANT: AN UNSUNG AMERICAN HEROINE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, today Miss Ruby McGilvray Bryant of Jackson, Mississippi, was recognized by the Mitsubishi USA Foundation and PBS Television's "To the Contrary" as one of America's four Unsung Heroines.

"Miss Ruby," as she is lovingly called, has served her Mississippi community for the better part of three decades. She has been instrumental in creating a number of programs to help physically and mentally challenged children and adults.

It all started thirty years ago when Miss Ruby looked for a way to give disabled children and adults a camp experience similar to the one other campers were enjoying. Working with the Mississippi State Park system, she created a one-week summer camp program full of activities including a beauty pageant where everyone wins—everyone gets his or her moment in the spotlight. With the help of Dream Catchers, a volunteer organization serving the disabled, campers also get to experience the thrill of horseback riding. Miss Ruby even went the extra mile by helping to raise the money needed to send a number of children and adults to this special camp. However, her efforts did not stop there. She also organized a number of other activities throughout the year such as hayrides and banquets.

Miss Ruby also fostered the development of the "the Mustard Seed," a

local residential home in Brandon, Mississippi, for disabled persons to live when their parents have passed away. The Mustard Seed teaches "life skills" so the disabled can be what they want most, independent and productive individuals.

She was also the driving force behind "Calvary Care," a program that provides all-day activities for the physically and mentally challenged in a safe and loving environment. Participants are taken on field trips to such places as the zoo or the museum. They also have an opportunity to share fun and fellowship, to experience the small things in life that many of us take for granted. This program also helps parents and other loved ones gain some much-needed time for themselves. "Calvary Care" attracts families from as far as 100 miles away because there is no similar program.

"Lady Talk," another of Miss Ruby's successful programs, is aimed at women who have little or no contact with the outside world. Many of its participants are former residents of mental institutions who have been long forgotten or abandoned by family members. Miss Ruby takes these women to a church facility for a day full of activities and social interaction. She makes sure that each woman is well fed and clothed and that each woman has someone to listen to their needs and problems.

As the director of the Sunday school special education program at Calvary Baptist Church since 1969, Miss Bryant has ensured that mentally and physically challenged individuals learn the Bible's teachings and play an active role in the ministry. Here, the children refer to her as "Sweet Momma."

Miss Ruby is an inspiration to us all. She teaches us that kindness, love, and patience are strong virtues. That self sacrifice is its own reward. That all of us, regardless of our abilities, are God's children and deserve respect and dignity. Most importantly, Miss Ruby is a shining example of how one person truly can make a positive difference in the life of so many others.

Miss Ruby is a heroine for Mississippi and heroine for America—for everything she has accomplished on behalf of the disabled and everything she will continue to do.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Miss Ruby McGilvray Bryant for her thirty years of dedicated service to the physically and mentally challenged, and their families, and for being recognized as an Unsung American Heroine.

APPRECIATION FOR THE SENATE SERVICE OF WILLIAM J. LACKEY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the Senate recently bid farewell to a longtime employee, William J. Lackey, who retired from the position of Journal Clerk. Bill was a familiar presence on the Senate dais, faithfully and accurately recording the daily proceedings of the Senate.

In fact, the Constitution requires that "each house of Congress shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time . . . publish the same." The Journal is the highest authority on actions taken by the Senate and can only be changed by a majority vote or by unanimous consent. Bill was responsible for recording the minutes of the Senate's legislative proceedings for publication as the annual Senate Journal. He always undertook this responsibility with great professional diligence and attention to detail.

In total, Bill gave 35 years of service to the Senate, more than 20 of those in the Office of the Journal Clerk. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Bill for his faithful and dedicated service, and wish him well in his retirement.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 3, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,653,396,336,274.78 (Five trillion, six hundred fifty-three billion, three hundred ninety-six million, three hundred thirty-six thousand, two hundred seventy-four dollars and seventy-eight cents).

One year ago, March 3, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,528,587,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-eight billion, five hundred eighty-seven million).

Five years ago, March 3, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,546,225,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred forty-six billion, two hundred twenty-five million).

Ten years ago, March 3, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,745,475,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred forty-five billion, four hundred seventy-five million) which reflects a doubling of the debt—an increase of almost \$3 trillion—\$2,907,921,336,274.78 (Two trillion, nine hundred seven billion, nine hundred twenty-one million, three hundred thirty-six thousand, two hundred seventy-four dollars and seventy-eight cents) during the past 10 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:59 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hanrahan, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 603. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to clarify the application of the act popularly known as the "Death on the High Seas Act" to aviation incidents.

H.R. 661. An act to direct the Secretary of Transportation to prohibit the commercial operation of supersonic transport category aircraft that do not comply with stage 3 noise levels if the European Union adopts certain aircraft noise regulations.

H.R. 707. An act to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize a program for predisaster, to streamline the administration of disaster relief, to control the Federal costs of disaster assistance, and for other purposes.